

May 19, 1921 — **SONS OF THE REVOLUTION WILL BE HERE SATURDAY/FORMER TUCKERTON BOY WILL DELIVER AN ADDRESS ON "THE MASSACRE AT LITTLE EGG HARBOR."**

The annual spring meeting of the Society of Sons of the Revolution of New Jersey will be held at Tuckerton, on SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1921.

The general meeting of the Society will be held in the Palace Theatre at 12 o'clock Luncheon will be served at the Carlton hotel following the meeting. At the conclusion of the luncheon, an address will be made by William E. Blackman, Esquire, a member of the Society and a native of Tuckerton, his subject being, "The Massacre at Little Egg Harbor." After the luncheon and address, the Society will proceed in automobiles to the monument erected by the New Jersey Society of the Cincinnati in memory of the patriots who perished in the surprise attack of the British; and thence to the Radio Station.

Residents on Main street and Green street are requested to decorate with flags in honor of these visitors.

September 20, 1928 — **CHESTNUT NECK SESQUICENTENNIAL TO ASSUME NATIONAL CHARACTER, OCT. 6/Movement Originated With The New Gretna Old Home Society**

The sesquicentennial celebration of the Battle of Chestnut Neck, on October 6, will assume the proportions of a nationally recognized observance.

At a meeting held in the Blue Room of the Hotel Chalfonte last week preliminary preparations were made for the observance which will take place on the site of the battle on New York Road, north of Absecon.

The program as tentatively arranged includes a pageant reproducing the Revolutionary engagement, with Atlantic County national guardsmen taking part, a parade, a program of band music and several short historical and patriotic addresses. It is intimated by Rollie Cale of Pleasantville, general chairman, that the U. S. Navy dirigible, "Los Angeles" might visit the battle site during the ceremonies to pay governmental recognition to the occasion.

The Sesquicentennial event had its birth in the Old Home Society of New Gretna, which society is composed in part of many Atlantic City folk, who either lived in New Gretna or were born of New Gretna parents.

Invitations are extended to all local civic organizations to take part, including Boy Scouts from nearby towns, American Legion and other patriotic orders.

From 1 o'clock p. m. until sundown on October 6th there will be action.

Samuel P. Leeds of Atlantic City, is director of the committee in charge of the sesquicentennial preparations, and Mr. Leeds together with Mr. Cale, Leonard E. Algar, Harry Headley, Prof. Maja C. Mathis, Hiram Mathis of New Gretna Old Home Society, are the sponsors of the project.

Preparations are being made to receive 15,000 visitors on October 6th at the battle site, which was marked a number of years ago by a monument erected by the D. A. R. Members of the Mainland Post American Legion of Pleasantville, this week announced that the Post membership would attend the celebration en-masse. In addition, the committee has the assurance of the state Legion officers that more than 2,000 war veterans, together with their uniformed units and drum and bugle corps, will be present.

The pageant feature of the program is being arranged by a committee headed by Major Frederick Hickman of Atlantic City, and which includes Robert Cuzzen, of Pleasantville. It is expected that the militia men to be gathered by Major Hickman will re-enact the part the redcoats took in the battle while natives of Chestnut Neck and Port Republic sections will be cast in the roles of the Colonial farmer-warriors, whose descendants they are.

The Battle of Chestnut Neck was fought on October 6, 1778, between a punitive expedition of English under Major Scott Ferguson and small party of Little Egg Harbor fishermen and farmers. The natives of the South Jersey coast had been privateering British Army supply ships and consigning the goods to Washington's army at Valley Forge and their activities became so serious that the British took forceful steps to wipe out the thorn in their side.

Landing from the Mullica River, they made an attack upon a hastily constructed fort at Chestnut Neck, finally driving off the outnumbered and under-equipped Americans. Burning the settlement, they marched up the Mullica to destroy other stores and settlements, but were later driven back to their boats.

The engagement at Chestnut Neck had a similar effect on the 1778 theatre of the Revolution that the stand of Liege in 1914 had on the World War. By their brave stand, the Atlantic County patriots halted a move by which the whole of their activities in feeding the American armies was to be wiped out.

It is the opinion of those behind the sesquicentennial move that the engagement has not been given due significance by historians, and they believe that the celebration will bring, such recognition.

In preparation for the event, Pleasantville and the Mainland are taking an active part. Under Dr. Clyde M. Fish of Pleasantville, the emergency medical preparations are being made. The Pleasantville Red Cross nursing service will maintain a hospital tent

on the grounds, while the Pleasantville police ambulance will be held at Chestnut Neck during the celebration.

It is expected that several thousand people will be present throughout the day's program.

Tuckerton should be very much interested, for the battle the monument stands for at that point was continued into this territory and our own monument on the radio road marks the spot where blood was shed here in the battle for freedom.

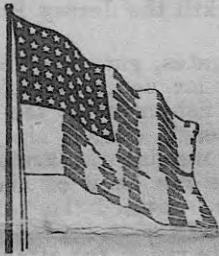
(Note: The numerous committees and committee members listed at the end of this article are not included.)

PROGRAM

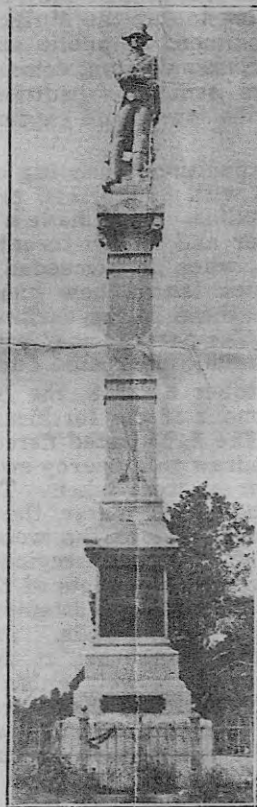
150th Anniversary Celebration Battle of Chestnut Neck AT MONUMENT New York Road, Port Republic, N. J.

1 to 6 P. M., Saturday, Oct. 6, 1928

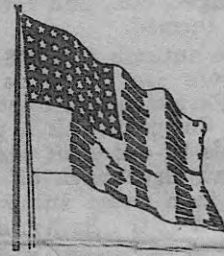
1778



In Honor
of
The Brave Patriots
of the
Revolutionary War
Who Defended
Their Liberties and
Their Homes in
A Battle Fought Near
This Site
October 6, 1778
Dedicated
Oct. 6, 1911



1928



Erected by the
State of New Jersey
Through
the Efforts of
General Lafayette
Chapter
N. S. D. A. R.
Miss Sarah Doughty
Mrs. Jos. Thompson
Mrs. J. J. Gardner

New Gretna Old Home Society

Atlantic County D. A. R.; Atlantic County Historical Society;
Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce; Pleasantville Kiwanis Club;
Civic, Fraternal and Educational Organizations,
and Patriotic Citizens of This Community

SPONSORS

Historic Sketch Battle of Chestnut Neck

October 6, 1778

During the Revolutionary War, Chestnut Neck was the largest village along the New Jersey Coast, and the most important naval base of the Continental Army. Privateers working out of Little Egg Harbor Inlet were the source of much annoyance and loss to British shipping. These privateers obtained from the British merchantmen large supplies that were of great value to the Continental Army. They were secured through the operation of light draft sail craft, manned by local patriots, these boats were built at local shipyards along the Mullica and Bass Rivers and along Nacote Creek, much of the timber being sawed at the mill of Micajah Smith and Patrick McCollum, which was located on the west side of the pond at Port Republic now known as Blackman's Pond. These daring sailors in their boats knew no fear and paid little respect to frequent warnings to cease their activities; neither did the size or armament of these merchantmen deter them in performing what they felt to be their patriotic duty.

In the spring of 1777 a few of these boats hailed and captured two large British merchantmen off Sandy Hook, the *Venus* and *Major Pearson*, with manifests from London, brought them into the Inlet and up the Mullica River, removed their cargoes, stripped the ships, sold their equipment at public auction and destroyed the hulls. Soon after this act of daring, Sir Henry Clinton, commanding the forces in New York, ordered a raid on these privateers, sent an expedition into the Inlet to destroy the boats, villages, etc., and retrieve the stores and capture or kill the Jersey Pirates, as they were termed.

In the autumn of 1778 an expedition consisting of frigates, gunboats, brigs and galleys, were sent into the Inlet with 300 picked men under command of Patrick (Stotch) Ferguson and Captain Collins. They made a local fisherman by the name of Nathaniel Cowperthwait a prisoner and, under threat of death, caused him to pilot them. This he did until nightfall, when he succeeded in grounding the armed sloops *Granby* and *Greenwich* off Mincock Island, now known as the head of the range. Nathaniel then swam and waded ashore in the darkness and notified the patriots of the approach of the British fleet. The patriots at Chestnut Neck soon organized under the command of Captain Johnson, made their sand dune forts ready for attack.

Late in the afternoon of October 6, 1778, the British arrived in the river and immediately commenced bombardment of the fortifications, and under the protection of this fire, landed their forces. The fight lasted fiercely for several hours, when the patriots found it necessary to withdraw to a nearby swamp, but not until the invaders had suffered losses and some prisoners were taken. This was not accomplished without sacrifices to their own small band. However, the patriots had held the invaders long enough for their families to escape to the woods. Several of the remaining patriots mounted their horses which they had previously tied back in the woodland, and rode through the night, notifying the patriots of the community of the attack by the British and of their probable intention of attempting to destroy or retrieve the stores at the Forks (Sweetwater), Pleasant Mills. The patriots responded promptly and intrenched themselves near the storehouses at the Forks ready for the attack. They held their fire until the raiders were well within range. So accurate was their fire, and so steady, that the British concluded they were facing a well organized force and retreated to their boats, in the river. The British taking part in the Chestnut Neck engagement, after routing the small band of patriots, burned all the homes and buildings, except one which still remains standing and is well preserved and occupied and is within a thousand feet of the monument. On the afternoon of the following day a detachment of the invaders destroyed the Matthews Salt Works, Baker's Mill and several dwellings on Bass River. They also effected a raid at Tuckerton, where salt works and dwellings were burned. A few days later, near the site of the monument at Tuckerton, near the wireless station, an outpost of Pulasky's Legion were surprised and forty of the fifty members of the unit were massacred.

Can you appreciate the change that came over these staid Quakers, into fiery fighting patriots, when need be, for the preservation of their land of freedom. Probably the Quaker background of these patriots, and the fact that they deplored the use of arms, except in self-defense, is responsible for so little reference to the activities and the importance that these local battles had in the final result of the war, particularly in furnishing the much-needed supplies for the Continental Army. Therefore this celebration to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of this historic event.

By ROLLIN A. CALE.

PROGRAM

1. "America" Assembly and Band
 2. Invocation Rev. R. Ashley Cake
 3. Opening Address S. P. Leeds
 5. Address (Local History) Prof. Majah C. Mathis
 6. "Star-Spangled Banner" Assembly and Band
 7. Address (Old Gloucester County) Frank H. Stewart
 8. Selection Band
 9. Patriotic Address Henry Merle Mellen, D. D.
 10. Revolutionary Relic Display S. Edgar Trout
Concert by Band During Display
 11. Introducing Oldest Local Patriot,
William Johnson (91), Port Republic
 12. SHAM BATTLE Red Coats vs. Continentals
As Uniformed in 1778—3000 Rounds Ammunition
ONE HOUR BATTLE
 13. Parade Military—Civic and Fraternal
 14. 5.33 P. M.—Sundown Salute Battery
 15. Concert Band
- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Song Leader | Program Chairman |
| Thomas L. Husselton | Selected |

CHICKEN DINNER

NEW GRETNA CIVIC SOCIETY

New Gretna Old Home Society Members and Guests

CIVIC HALL, NEW GRETNA

ROMANTIC SKETCH

A romantic side of the Battle of Chestnut Neck comes to us through the story of the courtship between John Mullinger, the spy, and Peggy Collins, the daughter of one of the local patriots. Upon one of the prisoners was found a map of the sand dune forts and roadways as well as waterways leading to the storehouses at Sweet-water, Pleasant Mills, "The Forks" on the upper Mullica. There was no indication as to the maker of these maps, but it was agreed that the handwriting resembled that of John Mullinger, a stranger who had spent much time in their midst, and who had been under suspicion, but who claimed to be a patriot. Mullinger had been courting Peggy Collins, a patriot's daughter. Peggy overheard her father say that Mullinger was to be made a prisoner and tried as a spy, and if found guilty, hanged. When Mullinger called that evening Peggy questioned him, but did not let him know that he was under suspicion. He claimed loyalty to the American cause. However, John disappeared the following day. A month later Mullinger came to the home of Peggy when the family was out. He apparently watched them go. He begged Peggy to meet him the following day and go with him to Philadelphia and be married. He also admitted that he was a spy. Peggy showed no emotion and agreed to go with him and meet him at a designated place near her home. She had made up her mind in spite of her ardent love for John to inform on him, which she did, and when Mullinger arrived for her the following day he was made a prisoner. He confessed his activities as a spy and was hanged. Before execution he asked to see Peggy, but Peggy had gone insane from grief. She died within a year. Mullinger was hanged in the woods at Chestnut Neck, a short distance from the Chestnut Neck monument.

New Gretna Old Home Society -- Sponsors

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Atlantic County Auxiliary, American Legion

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